

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

A communication network includes ~~comprising at least one~~ first and second terminals, ~~nodes~~ terminal, ~~at least one second terminal,~~ and ~~a plurality of links.~~ links, and at least first and second nodes. The first node is ~~bidirectionally~~ coupled to the first terminal through at least a the first link ~~one of the links,~~ and ~~also is bidirectionally~~ coupled to the second terminal through at least a the second link and the second node. ~~Preferably, the~~ The first node preferably includes ~~comprises a plurality of communication paths, each of which is coupled at a first end thereof to at least one corresponding first link and~~ comprises a plurality of communication paths, each of which is coupled at a first end thereof to at least one corresponding first link and ~~Second ends of the communication paths are all coupled to the second link, through a multiplexing device, and route routing signals between the first and second links.~~ Second ends of the communication paths are all coupled to the second link, through a multiplexing device, and route routing signals between the first and second links. The first node also preferably includes ~~comprises at least one~~ an alternate communication path ~~having a first end~~ coupled through the multiplexing device to the second link, ~~at least one~~ a switch ~~that is~~ coupled to the alternate ~~communication~~ path, and a detector ~~for~~ detecting a failure in ~~at least of a~~ one of the communication path ~~paths~~. A controller is ~~coupled to the detector and the switch.~~ The controller is responsive to the detector detecting a failure in at least one of the a communication path ~~communication paths~~ and controls ~~for controlling~~ the switch to couple the alternate ~~communication~~ path to a corresponding first link, thereby enabling a signal to be routed between that first and second links ~~link and the second link~~ through the alternate ~~communication~~ path.